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BOOK REVIEWS

IN CHARGE OF

M. E. CAMERON



HOW TO BECOME A NURSE. The Nursing Profession. How and Where to Train. Being a Guide to Training for the Profession of a Nurse, and Particulars of Nurse Training-Schools in the United Kingdom and Abroad, and an Outline of the Principal Laws Affecting Nurses, etc. Edited by Sir Henry Burdett, K.C.B. London: Scientific Press, Ltd.

This book, with its portentously long title, has just appeared in its seventh edition. The editor in his opening pages, which he styles "introductory and practical," claims that it is the only publication from which full and up-to-date particulars can be obtained concerning the nurse training-schools in the whole of the English-speaking countries of the world. This is reassuring, for one could scarcely bear the knowledge of another such collection. It is an instance once more repeated of the need of nurses doing for themselves, and not waiting to be done for by middlemen, non-professionals, or members of some other profession. Sir Henry Burdett has been identified for a lifetime with hospitals, nurse training-schools, and nurses. He of all men in the world, it would seem, must be able to represent nurses. But it can't be done by a man who is not a nurse. The book is intended in all good faith to be a safe and reliable guide to all, or, as the editor puts it, "every woman who is attracted to nursing and desires to become a fully trained nurse." Yet there is nothing to show, except to those of shrewd experience, the difference between a training-school where one receives a liberal education, is comfortably housed and in respectable company, from one which is maintained for the sole purpose of getting the nursing done at the very lowest figure possible, there being neither time nor opportunity for class work, and where one's fellow-nurses are liable to come from a class which has made a failure of domestic service. The idea of the book is to be commended. There is need of such a book, but it must be written by a leader in the profession. It is out of the question that any superintendent of a representative training-school could find time for a task so stupendous, but without the coöperation of the various superintendents of schools and that of the associations the book might as well remain unwritten.